

Louise Beilby
Senior Access Executive

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3 March 2026

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Franchise and Access Manager
Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
Baskerville House
Centenary Square
Birmingham
B1 2ND

Sue Rhymes
Track Access Manager
First Trenitalia West Coast Rail Ltd
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4DN

Dear Akaash and Sue

Approval of the 38th supplemental agreement to the track access contract between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (Network Rail) and First Trenitalia West Coast Rail Limited (trading as Avanti West Coast (AWC)) dated 1 December 2022

We have today approved the above supplemental agreement submitted to us formally on 2 March 2026 under section 22 of the Railways Act 1993 (the Act). This follows an earlier informal submission of a draft agreement for our consideration. This letter explains the reasons for our decision.

Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to grant AWC the rights necessary to continue to operate a service between Manchester Piccadilly and London Euston on a contingent basis. The right was put in place by means of the 37th supplemental agreement under the general approval provision, and this expires on 14 March 2026. This 38th supplemental agreement will extend the contingent right to the Subsidiary Change Date (SCD) in May 2026.

Industry consultation

Network Rail undertook the usual industry consultation for one month from 21 January 2026. Comments in support or raising no objection were received from Great Western Railway, Transport Focus, Northern Trains, and CrossCountry.



ORR review

Our review of the application raised no operational, performance or economic concerns. We note that this service has been operating on a contingent basis since the Principal Change Date (PCD) in December 2024 and our approval of this application to extend the right will allow it to continue running and therefore provide continuity of service for passengers in accordance with our duties.

Our duties under section 4 of the Act and our decision

We have concluded that approval of this supplemental agreement strikes the appropriate balance in discharging our statutory duties under section 4 of the Act; in particular, those relating to protecting the interests of users of railway services (section 4(1)(a)), promoting the use of the railway network for the carriage of passengers (section 4(1)(b)) and enabling persons providing railway services to plan their businesses with a reasonable degree of assurance (section 4(1)(g)).

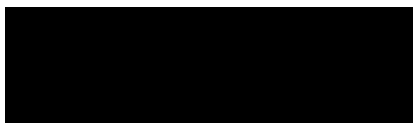
Conformed copy of the track access agreement

Under clause 18.2.4 of the track access contract, Network Rail is required to produce a conformed copy, within 28 days of any amendment being made, and send copies to ORR and the Train Operator. Please send the conformed copy to me at ORR.

Public register and administration

Electronic copies of this letter, the approval notice and the agreement will be sent to Network Rail's Policy and Access Team. Copies of the approval notice and the agreement will be placed on ORR's public register (website) and copies of this letter and the agreement will be placed on the ORR website.

Yours sincerely



Louise Beilby